

Answers

Extra Activity

1. Read the following information from TLP008PPT1 Slide 21:
Pytheas of Massalia (now Marseilles), a Greek merchant and explorer, circumnavigated the British Isles between about 330 and 320 BCE and produced the first written record of the islands.
Pytheas' original text no longer exists, but he is quoted by other writers. In 30 BCE Diodorus quoted what Pytheas said about Britain.

Britain is cold and subject to frosts... The numerous population of natives live in thatched cottages, store their grain in subterranean caches and bake bread from it. They are "of simple manners" and are content with plain fare. They are ruled by many kings and princes who live in peace with each other. Their troops fight from chariots, as did the Greeks in the Trojan War.

2. Can you identify where Pytheas includes his opinion rather than just making observations?
Clue: look at the punctuation.

Pytheas says that Iron Age Britons have 'simple manners'. 'Simple' is an opinion. There is no description of their manners and no comparison made with more sophisticated manners.

Also, he says they are 'content' with the food they eat. This is an opinion and is unlikely to be true as archaeological evidence suggests they had many illnesses due to a poor diet.

3. Can you identify a contradiction in this paragraph? Can you explain why it might not be a contradiction if more detail had been included? Clue: Think about the number of Iron Age arrow heads that have been found by archaeologists.

Pytheas says that the 'kings and princes... live in peace with each other'. Iron Age Britons lived in small communities with defensive ramparts. Also, arrowheads have been found. This would suggest they are armed and engage in combat. Pytheas goes on to say that they have 'troops' who 'fight from chariots'. If they are fighting they are not at peace. However, it could be that the Iron Age Britons are at peace with one another but have to fight invaders. More detail should have been provided if this is the case.

4. This report is very brief. What do you think should have been included?

Religious beliefs and practices. Education. Clothing. Technology etc.